Gender-fluid police given male and female warrant cards

Officers who identify as both men and women issued with two sets of identity documents

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Hayley Dixon
Special Correspondent
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Gender-fluid police officers have been handed two warrant cards so they can identify as a man one day and a woman the next, The Telegraph can reveal.

Forces including those in Suffolk, Norfolk and Leicestershire confirmed they had issued more than one card to officers who said they identified as both male and female.

MPs and campaigners said the practice risked undermining public trust in the police, while other forces warned that it was a security risk.

Warrant cards are the official identity documents that officers must show before using powers such as stop and search.

Thorough stop and searches, which require a person to remove more than their hat, gloves and coat, must be carried out by an officer of the same sex.

Guidance from the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) has been updated in the wake of the Supreme Court trans ruling to say that this must be an officer of the same biological sex.

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Allowing officers to carry warrant cards that reflect their gender identity could cause confusion about a person's rights.

The term gender-fluid is used when a person says that their identity changes, sometimes identifying as a man and other times as a woman.

Chris Philp, the shadow home secretary, said: "Police forces should not be allowing officers to jump from one gender to the next whenever they feel like it. This risks undermining public trust in policing.

"When it comes to things like conducting strip searches of suspects, the gender of the officer is relevant, as some suspects only want to be strip-searched by someone of the same biological sex.

"The police should concentrate on the basics of policing, which is protecting the public and catching more criminals."

Leicestershire, Norfolk and Suffolk all confirmed in response to freedom of information requests that they had issued officers with more than one warrant card to reflect different genders. Other forces are understood to have policies in place which allow the practice in theory.

Issue dual or multiple cards

Norfolk and Suffolk, which have combined HR and support departments, have a Trans Equality at Work policy that states: "Transitioning individuals are likely to want their warrant cards and staff identity cards

updated. These may need to be updated more than once to reflect an individual's physical changes.

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"The organisation will be able to issue dual or multiple cards for those who are transitioning or are gender-fluid if this is specifically requested.

"If an individual does transition fully to their chosen gender then they must relinquish their dual cards so that a single card can be issued in their chosen identity. Individuals transitioning may also want to change their collar or pay number, and should be consulted as to their preference."

The policy also allows officers to "wear items that assist in their gender confirmation/identity according to their needs, eg wearing a wig, prosthetics, binders" and warns officers against "dead-naming" their colleagues.

It follows guidance in 2018, written by Stonewall in partnership with the NPCC, which stated that "individuals who identify as gender-fluid may require two cards to reflect their gender on different days".

The guidance has since been removed from the NPCC website. A spokesman confirmed that the organisation did not have any live guidance on the issue.

Some forces have refused to issue multiple cards. South Yorkshire Police said that it would not do so for "security reasons".

Harry Miller, a former police officer and founder of the campaign group Fair Cop, told The Telegraph: "Allowing an officer to be a man one day and

a woman the next is one of the stupidest things that I have heard.

“The public need to know with whom they are dealing – some of the essentials are what is their name, what is their collar number, and you want to know whether it is a man or a woman.

“All this does is sow unnecessary confusion and division and undermines public trust in the police.

“If the police can’t recognise a man from a woman, how can you trust them to recognise a crime from a non-crime? The police need to have policies based on reality and not political ideology or woke stupidity.”

A Leicestershire Police spokesman said: “Multiple ID cards are issued in certain limited circumstances, and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. This is in line with force equality guidance. Any request will be done with the consideration of security risks and public confidence.”

A spokesman for Norfolk Constabulary said: “Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies are reviewing relevant policies following recent court judgments and we are awaiting further direction from the National Police Chiefs’ Council.

“Any arrangements relating to warrant cards or identification documents are subject to appropriate security controls and governance processes.”

None of the forces confirmed whether they currently have officers carrying multiple warrant cards.

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